

to pay for things we don't absolutely need. How do we get out of that?

I recognize the debate. Unfortunately, I had a drafting error in what I intended to offer so we are offering pay-fors from what I think is not necessarily the best source, but it is better than not paying for it. There is \$100 billion in unobligated balances sitting at the agencies in this country. It has already been used to pay for certain things we have already voted on. Nobody would feel the pinch if we did it that way.

I would be inclined to ask for a unanimous consent, but I will not do that until I am sure the other side will not object to it, to have a change in the paperwork in mine from what I originally intended but, because of a drafting error, I cannot use. But nevertheless, the legitimate debate is whether we borrow and steal from our kids or we get out of town and send the bill to our kids for something we are going to consume today.

There is a disease that is called consumption—it is syphilis. It is consumption because it consumes you. We have a disease similar to that. Our disease actions in Congress are consuming away the opportunity of America, much of it because we lack perspective but most of it because we lack the will to make the difficult choices that are in front of us. I wonder—actually, I am sometimes astonished—why people do not go home from here at night tremendously concerned about our future, enough so that it causes us to come together to do the best, right thing for America. Is the best, right thing for America to borrow this \$9.2 billion? Is that the best, right thing for America? Or would it be that we eliminate programs that are not nearly as effective or lessen programs that are not nearly as effective as these are going to be for those people who are depending on us today? Not just the best, right thing in the short term, because another disease that plagues us is we fail to consider the long term oftentimes—not all the time. But we become short-term thinkers, thinking about, where is the political advantage? How do I look good? How do I accomplish what I want to accomplish for me or my State? I think it is important that we understand there is no State in this country that can be healthy if our country is not healthy—if the country isn't economically healthy, if it is not socially healthy. If it is not, then we have not done our job.

My apologies to the leader for putting him in this position. It is with a very intended sense of commitment that I want us to try to pay for this. I understand there is disagreement in that regard, but I look forward to trying to solve this problem, and if we can, I look forward to having the debate as it goes forward.

I yield to the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. I say to my friend from Oklahoma, he has not put me in an

awkward position at all. We would have been happy just to vote on this.

That being the case, what I will do—and I alert everybody we are not going to rush this, so people will have time to get here—I move to table the motion to proceed.

I ask for the yeas and nays.

Mr. COBURN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. SHAHEEN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 59, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 106 Leg.]

YEAS—59

| | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|
| Akaka | Franken | Murray |
| Baucus | Gillibrand | Nelson (NE) |
| Bayh | Hagan | Nelson (FL) |
| Begich | Harkin | Pryor |
| Bennet | Inouye | Reed |
| Bingaman | Johnson | Reid |
| Boxer | Kaufman | Rockefeller |
| Brown (OH) | Kerry | Sanders |
| Burr | Klobuchar | Schumer |
| Byrd | Kohl | Shaheen |
| Cantwell | Landrieu | Specter |
| Cardin | Lautenberg | Stabenow |
| Carper | Leahy | Tester |
| Casey | Levin | Udall (CO) |
| Conrad | Lieberman | Udall (NM) |
| Dodd | Lincoln | Warner |
| Dorgan | McCaskill | Webb |
| Durbin | Menendez | Whitehouse |
| Feingold | Merkley | Wyden |
| Feinstein | Mikulski | |

NAYS—40

| | | |
|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Alexander | Crapo | McCain |
| Barrasso | DeMint | McConnell |
| Bennett | Ensign | Murkowski |
| Bond | Enzi | Risch |
| Brown (MA) | Graham | Roberts |
| Brownback | Grassley | Sessions |
| Bunning | Gregg | Shelby |
| Burr | Hatch | Snowe |
| Chambliss | Hutchison | Thune |
| Coburn | Inhofe | Vitter |
| Cochran | Johanns | Voinovich |
| Collins | Kyl | Wicker |
| Corker | LeMieux | |
| Cornyn | Lugar | |

NOT VOTING—1

Isakson

The motion was agreed to.

Mrs. McCASKILL. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. REED. Madam President, even though we have made an extraordinary advance in health care reform, we still have millions of Americans who are without jobs and in need of unemploy-

ment insurance. We are in a situation that requires action.

Early this month, we were able to pass a 30-day extension by a vote of 78 to 19. It was overwhelmingly adopted, but it was not quickly adopted because of the delay and the procedures imposed upon the process. We might in this Chamber understand the nuances of rules and procedures, but for the people who have been without work for up to a year or more, the nuances escape them. They need help. The reality is, on April 5 this extension will expire. We will not be in session, so we are here today to continue the work that we must do as Members of this Senate.

We have already passed in this body a year-long extension along with some other tax provisions—again, under the leadership of Chairman BAUCUS. That provision is over in the House, and it is unlikely to move today or tomorrow. The House sent us a provision for another 1-month extension. That is bottled up. But, again, all of these legislative initiatives do not put the check in the mail for those who are without work.

That is what we have to do. We have to pass another extension, at least to get us from April into next month and beyond. Of course, I think the year-long extension until the end of this calendar year is the right approach. It has already been adopted, and I hope we can return and embrace that proposal.

If we do not move, at a minimum, for a temporary extension, approximately 1,200 Rhode Islanders will start losing their benefits each week starting April 5. By the end of April, three-quarters of 1 million unemployed workers across the Nation will lose their benefits.

This is at a moment when we are beginning to see some economic traction, some reports of progress in labor markets. Just today it was reported that initial unemployment claims fell by 14,000—a number much larger than the experts expected. Now we are in a very difficult moment when we look at the good news being that “the claims fell.” But that is a prelude to the point we have to achieve: when not only the claims fall but the jobs start growing and growing and growing.

We have come a long way since President Obama took office: 700,000 people a month who were losing their job—with huge, catastrophic, ramifications throughout the economy. That is beginning to turn around. But until we are back to a robust employment situation, we cannot ignore people who need help through the unemployment compensation system.

I believe the major point at this juncture between the two sides is the issue of how do we pay for this, its cost. We have adopted, as Democrats, what was ignored and then dismissed by Republicans, which is the concept of pay-go, of paying for government activities either by revenue increases or by offsetting reductions. But we have always understood that in emergencies these pay-go rules properly can be suspended;